

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 02775 171032Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PPT-01 CA-01 SCS-06 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 SY-05 ICA-11 DODE-00 SS-15 OC-06 CCO-00
/067 W

-----127333 171051Z /14

P 171010Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8006

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2775

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC LE
SUBJ: WARNING TO U.S. TRAVELERS TO LEBANON

REF: (A) STATE 117851, (B) STATE 123105

1. THE MURDER OF AMCIT PAUL WILSON OUTSIDE BEIRUT MAY 10 IS SYMPTOMATIC OF CONTINUING VIOLENCE AND LAWLESSNESS WHICH PREVAIL IN BEIRUT AREA AND LEBANON IN GENERAL, BUT THERE ARE ASPECTS OF THE WILSON CASE WHICH IN OUR VIEW MAKE IT UNIQUE. IF USG WERE TO ISSUE A FORMAL DEPARTMENT TRAVEL ADVISORY WARNING AGAINST ALL TRAVEL TO LEBANON AT THIS TIME, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING FAILURE OF PRESIDENT SARKIS TO FORM A NEW NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT, IT COULD WELL BE INTERPRETED HERE AS A SIGN OF NO CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT SARKIS. WE REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT IN FINAL ANALYSIS, DECISION MUST BE BASED ON OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS CONTEMPLATING TRAVEL TO LEBANON KNOW THE KIND OF SITUATION THEY WILL BE FACING. WE THEREFORE PROPOSE THAT AN UPDATED CIRCULAR BE SENT TO ALL PASSPORT OFFICES AND EMBASSIES AND CONSULAR OFFICES ABROAD MODIFYING WORDING OF REF A, AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE: IN VIEW OF THE UNCERTAIN SECURITY SITUATION IN LEBANON, U.S. CITIZENS SHOULD BE ADVISED TO POSTPONE THEIR TRAVEL UNLESS THEY HAVE URGENT REASONS FOR GOING NOW. UNQUOTE. IF THIS NOTICE COMES TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GOL AND WE

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ARE ASKED ABOUT IT, WE WOULD SIMPLY SAY THAT WE WERE UPDATING PREVIOUS GUIDANCE AND HAVE NO INFORMATION TO SUGGEST THAT THE SECURITY SITUATION HAS CHANGED.

2. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH CONSULT AMBASSADOR PARKER, WHO IS CURRENTLY ON CONSULTATIONS, ON THIS QUESTION.
LANE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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